

Diocese of Raleigh

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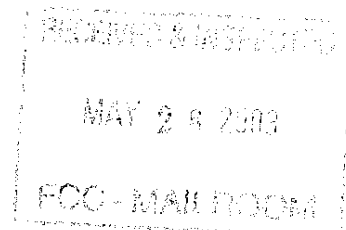
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Office of the Bishop

May 23, 2003

Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th St., S.W.
Room TW-204B
Washington, D.C. 20554



**Re: Informal Comments, MB Dkt. No. 02-277;
MM Dkt. No. 01-235; MM Dkt. No. 01-317;
MM Dkt. No. 00-244**

Dear Ms. Secretary:

The Diocese of Raleigh submits the following informal comments in the above-referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, released September 23, 2002.

The Diocese has long been concerned about the erosion of local news and public affairs programming caused by the FCC's and Congress weakening of broadcast ownership limits, and the FCC's elimination of broadcast rules which formerly had permitted the FCC and the community to monitor broadcasters to help ensure that broadcasters served their community of license with programs which meet community needs and interests.

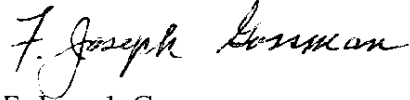
It is the concern of this diocese that continued consolidation of broadcast properties by a few media companies is not benefiting the public, but on the contrary lessening the opportunity for divergent voices and opinion. When one company can purchase four, five, eight radio stations in one market, then in all likelihood, the news and public affairs departments will either be eliminated or consolidated into one decision making operation, which decides on philosophy and coverage for all stations. That is **NOT** serving the public good.

The Diocese urges the FCC to refrain from making changes in the current rules which (a) prohibit cross-ownership of broadcast stations and newspapers in the same community, (b) limit the number of television and radio stations a single entity may own in a single community, (c) set a national ownership cap for television station at an already overly generous 35% of households, and (d) prohibit common ownership of major television networks. Cable television already is dominated by

Bishop Gene Robinson
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the same companies that dominate television and satellite systems and the programming on those systems, and those same companies are moving into providing Internet access. Neither cable nor the Internet (whether offered through cable or telephone companies) offer meaningful alternatives to the already scarce supply of truly local news and local public affairs programs on over-the-air television and radio.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "F. Joseph Gossman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "G".

F. Joseph Gossman
Bishop of Raleigh

cc: Senator John Edwards
Senator Elizabeth Dole
Representative Frank Ballance
Representative Walter Jones
Representative Robert Etheridge
Representative David Price
Representative Brad Miller